

REMARKS

Claims 1–14 are provisionally rejected for double patenting over Claims 1-11 of a later filed copending Application Serial No. 09/961,234. The provisional rejection is not understood. It is appropriate to allow the claims presented in this, the earlier filed application, and then to consider whether or not a double patenting rejection is appropriate in the later filed application.

Claims 1-14 are rejected as obvious over the CollegeEdge website and an article “CollegEdge, the Leading Provider of Web-Based Services to Educational Institutions, Announces Success of Enrollment Services System, Business Wire, March 1, 1999. Applicant assumes that the rejections are independent since there is no “in view of” language in the rejection. Reconsideration of both rejections is solicited.

The article discloses a method which is essentially a bulletin board, i.e., in which candidates populate a database with data other than the identity of the candidate. A number of institutions have non-exclusive access to this candidate populated database. The accessing institutions evaluate the candidates on the basis of the available information in accordance with their respective criteria and initiate a blind electronic contact with the unidentified candidate. Candidates who choose to respond to such contact by the institution by releasing their identity may then be provided by the institution with an application for enrollment at that institution.

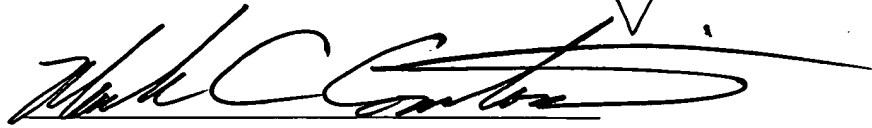
In marked contrast, the present invention is directed to a database provided by a single institution (rather than by a third party), where only one institution has access to the database (rather than competing institutions), where the identity of the candidates is known (rather than secret), and where the decision to forward an application is made by the institution based on the evaluation of the institution (rather than the solicitation by the candidates of an application by the disclosure of their identity).

Thus the claimed methods are dramatically different from that described in the cited article, and the examiner has not identified any suggestion in the art cited for the substantial changes which would have to be made to the method disclosed in the article to arrive at any of the claimed methods. Reconsideration is accordingly solicited.

The website discloses web-based products tailored to prospective college and business school applicants, guidance counselors, and admissions professionals. The products directed to business school applicants and guidance counselors clearly are not included in, or relevant to, the Examiner's rejection. The products directed to prospective college applicants and admissions professionals appear to be directed to essentially the same method as disclosed in the article.

The above discussion thus appears to be equally applicable to this rejection and withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the application is accordingly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark C. Comtois', is written over a horizontal line. A long, thin line extends from the end of the signature towards the upper right corner of the page.

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